and removal of fish plated joints.

(iv) Mechanisation of track maintenance by use of tie tamping and ballast cleaning machines and use of ultrasonic flaw detectors for detction of hidden flaws in rails.

(v) Regular patrolling of track by gangmen.

(vi) Improvement in condition of rolling stock by replacement of conventional 4-wheeler wagons with brass bearings by 8-wheeler wagons with roller bearings.

(vii) Replacement of wagons having old vacuum brake system by new generation wagons having air-braked system.

(viii) Ultrasonic testing equipments have been provided at ROH depots for timely detection of cracks in the axles.

(ix) Retionalisation of examination pattern of goods and coaching trains.

(x) Increased emphasis on training of staff.

शाहगंज तथा मऊ जंक्शन के बीच चलने वाली रेलगाड़ियां

2003. **श्री ईश दत्त यादव:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि शाहगंज और मऊ जंक्शन के बीच बड़ी रेल लाइन के उद्घाटन हो जाने के बावजूद अभी तक इस रेल मार्ग पर लंबी दूरी की कोई नई रेलगाड़ी शुरू नहीं की गई है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं;

(ग) शाहगंज और मऊ जंक्शन के बीच नई रेलगाड़ियां कब तक चलाई जाएंगी; और

(घ) तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

रेल मंत्री (श्री राम विलास पासवान): (क) से (घ) अगस्त 97 से 4649/4650 दिल्ली-दरभंगा सरयू यमुना (सप्ताह में तीन दिन) एक्सप्रेस तथा 9165/9166 अहमदाबाद-मुजफ्फरपुर साबरमती (सप्ताह में तीन दिन) एक्सप्रेस को मऊ-शाहगंज के रास्ते चलाया जाएगा जो इस खण्ड से दिल्ली, लखनऊ तथा अहमदाबाद के लिए सीधी यात्रा सुविधा मुहैया कराएगी।

Taranga Hills-Mehsana railway line

2004. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Taranga Hills-Mehsana railway line was closed with the commencement of conversion work of New Delhi-Ahmedabad line from MG to BG;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this line has not been opened even after the completion of conversion work of Delhi-Ahmedabad line so far;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) how much more time it will take to restart the Taranga-Mehsana rail line?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) **Yes, Sir.**

(c) Services could not be restored due to extensive damages caused to the railway track in the recent floods.

(d) It will take about two months time to restore the line.

रेल यात्रा की बजाए सड़क यात्रा को प्राथमिकता दिया जाना

2005. **श्री नागमणि:** क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या इस तथ्य के बावजूद कि रेल यात्रा सस्ती और पर्यावरणानुकूल होती है लोगों द्वारा रेलों से यात्रा करने के बजाय सड़क द्वारा यात्रा को प्राथमिकता दिये जाने के कारणों का पता लगाने के लिए कोई अध्ययन किया गया है अथवा समिति गठित की गई है; और

(ख) ऐसी प्राथमिकताएं दिए जाने के क्या कारण है?

रेल मंत्री (श्री राम विलास पासवान): (क) और (ख) जी हां रेल किराया एवं माल भाड़ा समिति (1993) ने इस पहलू की जांच की है रोडवेज को तरजीह देने के मुख्य कारण हैं:—

1. अधिक बारम्बारता के कारण सड़क परिवहन कम दूरी के यात्रियों के लिए, अधिक उपयुक्त है।

2. रोडवेज कुल मिलाकर यात्रा स्थल तक लम्बी दूरी में यात्री द्वारा यात्रा किए बिना स्थल दर स्थल सेवा प्रदान करती है। बहरहाल लंबी दूरी की यात्रा के लिए रेल परिवहन वरीयता वाला साधन है।

Laying of additional track between Mumbai CST and Thane

2006. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the answer to the Unstarred Question No. 800 given in the Rajya Sabha on 29th November, 1996 and state;

(a) whether Government have received the Engineering feasibility study report in respect of laying additional track between Mumbai-CST and Thane from M/s RITES;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the construction work is likely to be undertaken by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Inclusion of the project in the Railway Plan depends on outcome of study report, availability of funds and clearance by the Government.

Appointment of Bishop as Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board

2007. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that a Bishop of the Evangelical Church of Tamil Nadu has been apointed as Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board;

(b) whether Government have plans to appoint Purohits and Maulvis to similar posts;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) Shri Manuel Ezra Sargunam whose bio data shows him to be the President of Evangelical Church of India has been appointed as Chairman, Railway Recruitment Board, Madras, on adhoc basis. There is no proposal under consideration for appointment of any person as Chairman of any Railway Recruitment Boards on the basis of being a Purohit or a Maulvi, as only the persons fulfilling the eligibility criteria, viz. being serving/ retired officials of the Central (including Railways)/State Governments, ex-MPs and men of repute, e.g. educationists, lawyers, etc. within the age group of 45 to 62 years are considered for such appointments on regular basis by selection through UPSC or keeping the exigencies of service in view, on adhoc basis.

Abstention from work by South Central Railway employees

2008. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news report in the "Deccan Chronicle" (Hyderabad - Late City edition), dated the 26th June, 1997 entitled "Wilful abstentions derail South Central Railway", highlighting that a large number of employees of the South Central Railway abstain from work but yet manage to be technically present in the official register and collect their salaries; and

(b) if so, the details of the modus operandi adopted by the employees and the action taken/proposed to be taken on the enquiry conducted, if any?